

# Herald of Hope

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## Off the Street



**Typical Street Shelter During Rainy Season**  
Photo Credit: TK, Future of Africa

Imagine a high-profile football game at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, or the Cotton Bowl in Dallas, Texas. The stadium is fully packed with cheering fans enjoying the game and urging their teams on. Now, imagine that all the fans in the stadium are young people – children and teenagers – who will be heading out of the stadium at the end of the game to spend the night sleeping on the storefronts and pavements in the city. It sounds implausible and overwhelming but that is the number of young people living on the streets of Accra, Ghana – over 90,000. Every day they are at the mercy of the weather, and every night they are at the mercy of unscrupulous adults. Children on the streets are at the very bottom of society's ladder and often have no one to speak on their behalf.

In May, a 16-year-old boy called Aaron experienced the most brutal version of life on the streets. Aaron had been on drugs while on the streets, but had seen the

transformation in other youth who had left the streets and was beginning to dream of a better life. He said he didn't want to waste his life anymore and was asking for a second chance from TK, the leader of Future of Africa, a group that supports street-connected children. One Sunday evening, two weeks after TK and Aaron spoke about the possibility of Aaron going back to school, TK got a call. Aaron had been shot on Saturday evening. TK was frantic and started contacting others on the streets who confirmed that Aaron had been shot by the police! Multiple accounts pointed to the fact that Aaron had been found trying to cut some tarp off an old billboard. The police felt threatened by the knife he was wielding and they proceeded to shoot him in the side. Now, there is a reason why Aaron was cutting the billboard tarp. During the rainy season, many people on the street use the billboard tarp and sticks to build small tents to help them keep dry.



**VILLAGE OF HOPE**

Rescuing. Repairing. Preparing. Propelling.

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### **LOCAL OVERSIGHT**

The Elders of  
Vertical Centre Church of Christ,  
Community Six, Tema, Ghana.

### **SUPPORT**

VOH-Ghana,  
A 501(c)(3) Non-profit.

### **MINISTRIES**

Hope Children's Village  
Hope Training Institute  
Hope Christian Academy  
Hope Christian Hospital  
Church of Christ School  
Hope College  
Agriculture  
Church of Christ at Village of Hope  
Campus Church of Christ - Ayawaso  
Evangelism  
Church Planting and Strengthening

After Aaron was shot, he was left bleeding by the roadside until a good Samaritan showed up to take him to the hospital. By the time they got to the hospital, Aaron had lost a lot of blood. He needed a transfusion but there was no blood readily available. By the time a relative had been found, it was too late. Aaron was dead.

In many areas of the city, children like Aaron are considered a nuisance because they “disturb the peace” and are an eyesore as they beg for change from drivers who stop at traffic lights or try to earn some money by cleaning car windshields. Police raids to clear them off the streets often result in them getting hurt. The “system” does not understand the root cause behind their constant appearance on the streets – true hunger, abject poverty, broken homes, irresponsible parents.

At Hope Training Institute, there are young people like Aaron who are still alive only by the grace of God. One of them is Emmanuel, a boy who has had his share of life on the streets. Before his 10th birthday, Emmanuel had lived with his mother, his grandmother, and then his uncle, Derick. His father was never in the picture. Derick was a busy man and was hardly ever at home and so his wife was the one directly taking care of Emmanuel. Unfortunately, she mistreated Emmanuel countless times and this forced him to spend less time at home and more time on the streets of Kasoa, looking for ways to survive on his own. He dropped out of school at the second grade, and this began a six-year journey during which Emmanuel began associating with riff raffs who moved with him from Kasoa to Accra. By the time Emmanuel was 13, he had been taught how to smoke, thinking that would make him look tough. He had been attacked countless times by older boys, and had fallen sick even more times because of poor hygiene and malnutrition.

During the day, Emmanuel begged on the streets and cleaned windshields at the traffic lights to make ends meet. He also made deals with other street vendors who would give him items like sweets, popcorn, and sachets of water to sell on commission. At night, Emmanuel slept wherever he could – at the Tema Station bus terminal, on the pavements near the Movenpick Ambassador Hotel, at the entrance of the British Council, or around the offices of the various government ministries.

In 2017, after six years on the streets, Emmanuel was brought to Hope Training Institute. All this while, his uncle had been looking for him to no avail. Unfortunately, the day after Derick was notified about Emmanuel's current location, he passed away but we were able to trace his mother and other uncles and the family relationship is gradually being restored. Emmanuel is in the leatherworks program, learning how to make bags and turning his life around.

Then there is the story of Roger who began life in the Upper East Region of Ghana, where he lived with his maternal grandparents while his mother lived in Accra trying to make a living. Little is known about his father. In 2015, when Roger was in sixth grade, he was brought to Zeenu, a suburb of Ashaiman, to live with his mother, stepfather and other siblings. Roger sold sachet water to support his mother but she was very abusive towards him. One day, when he returned home very late, his enraged mother pounced on him and he ran away from home. For weeks, he worked as a bus conductor at the Ashaiman lorry station before his mother found him and took him home where he continued to sell water to support the family. Then, one day he joined some friends and decided to use the days' sales for betting/gambling. He was severely beaten by his mother and as she tried to hit his head with a large



**Roger, Emmanuel & Ali**



**Ali, Emmanuel & Roger at Work on Various Projects**





**Graduated Trainees Work and Interact with Some Current Trainees**



**Graduated Trainees at Workshop Making Bags**



**Laptop Sleeves Made at Hope Training Institute**

pestle, Roger fled. That night he slept at the lorry station and after narrating his story to a stranger, the man gave him some of his goods to sell for a commission. When he had made 15 cedis (a little over \$3), he made the trip to the capital, Accra.

For the next 13 months, Roger worked as a bus conductor during the day and slept in the lorries and on the pavements and walkways in and around the bus terminal. In May 2017, Roger began a new life at Hope Training Institute. In October of that same year, he was reconciled with his family. Roger's mother narrated the humiliation she and her husband had suffered from relatives and community members for their irresponsibility which had led to Roger's escape. There were tears of joy and apologies. At Hope Training Institute, Roger is enrolled in the sewing program, learning how to make clothes and accessories.

Ali is a leatherworks trainee at Hope Training Institute. Ali does not know his biological parents or any other blood relations because he was still a baby when his father left him in the care of Memuna. According to Memuna, Ali's father lives in Nigeria. Memuna was a good foster mother to Ali and they had a wonderful relationship until one of Memuna's biological children returned to Ghana from Nigeria to live with them at Atebubu in the Brong Ahafo Region. Ali's foster brother was physically and verbally abusive and insisted that Ali miss school sometimes to work at his tailoring shop. Whenever Ali insisted on going to school instead, he got punished.

Eventually, Ali decided to leave home and travel to Kumasi. First, he spent two days at the Atebubu market as a porter, carrying goods for shoppers and traders. With the money earned, he made the trip to Kumasi where he lived at the Kejetia lorry station and began a life of hustling. He made some friends who took him in and introduced him to acting in local movies but Ali left when one of the older boys attempted to abuse him sexually. Back at the Kejetia lorry station, Ali met Ben, an auto mechanic who offered to take him in and train him. For seven months, Ali was with Ben during the day and sleeping at the lorry station at night. Then, one morning, Ali was yet again faced with disappointment when he got to the workshop and realized Ben had closed down the shop and travelled without telling him. Ali tried unsuccessfully to find other who would teach him for free as Ben did but everyone demanded money that he simply did not have. As is the nomadic nature of street life, Ali eventually travelled to Ashaiman looking for greener pastures. At Ashaiman, Ali worked for a carpet seller who did not keep to his end of the payment agreement that they had. Again, Ali left. While spending nights sleeping at the lorry station, he worked as a "loading boy" during the day, and washed cars in the evenings. Through his car washing jobs, he became a driver's mate (conductor). For about 18 months, Ali would juggle between begging on the streets, wiping windshields, and following the bus driver around until he was brought to Hope Training Institute.

Many are the sad stories that bring young people to Hope Training Institute and our work is to give them love, teach them about Jesus, feed and clothe them, provide them with a skill, instil discipline in them, reconcile them with their families, and equip them for a better future. In our efforts to become more self supporting and make the work sustainable, we have created the "Off the Street by Village of Hope (OTS by VOH)" brand through which the products that the past trainees, instructors and current trainees learn to make are sold to raise funds for the work.

The repair process of a child who has faced the harshness of street life is a slow and difficult one, but each small step forward keeps us going. Supporting this work by ordering products for personal use, for events, and as gifts to others, means supporting the training and rehabilitation of a street child. Each purchase of an OTS by VOH product means helping a former street child to learn valuable skills and to continue earning an income from the skills received at Hope Training Institute. Join us to equip them for eternity! [@](#)





**Travelling/Gym Bags  
(Duffel Bags)**



**Overnight Totes**

**Laptop Sleeves**



**Large Totes  
(Teacher Bags)**







**Table Runners**



**Placemats**



**Coin Banks**



**Backpacks**



**Small Totes  
(Church Bag)**



Order these products and many more to support the rescuing, training, and rehabilitation of street-connected youth.

To place larger orders or custom orders, please send us an email at [hti@thevillageofhope.com](mailto:hti@thevillageofhope.com).

Follow us on Facebook: **OTSbyVOH**

Visit [thevillageofhope.com](http://thevillageofhope.com) and click on **"Off the Street"** to browse through our available products and make a purchase to support the children.



**Wrap Skirts**



**Drawstring Bags**



# Juliet & Edward Marry

**J**uliet Okrah and Edward Nyamekye married on Saturday, July 7, 2018 at the Bob & Pam Chisholm Chapel on the Fetteh campus of Village of Hope. The occasion brought together the family of Edward and the Village of Hope family of Juliet in a joyous celebration.

Juliet and her siblings became part of the Village of Hope family in 2001 after the death of their parents. Last year, she graduated from Cape Coast Polytechnic with a diploma in Hotel and Institutional Management. She then worked at the Nursing and Midwifery Training College at Dunkwa-on-Offin for a year to complete requirements for national service, which each Ghanaian college graduate is required to perform.

Below are pictures from the marriage ceremony.



**Edward & Juliet**



**Family Members of Juliet Pose with the Couple**



**Siblings of Juliet (who grew up with her at the Village of Hope) rejoiced with their sister on the joyous occasion of her marriage.**



**Bride's Family Receives Dowry from Groom's Family**



**Family Members of Juliet & Edward**



# What Will Your Legacies Be?

By Fred Asare

**H**ebrews 11 is one of my favorite chapters in the entire Bible. I am always encouraged and motivated when I read about the faith exhibited by the men and women whose names appear in that portion of the Scriptures.

The first person mentioned in this impressive list of people who exhibited living faith is Abel. **“By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.”** (Hebrews 11:4).

Even though he is dead, he still speaks! Now, that is profound!!! Because of what Abel did while he was alive, even though he has been dead for so long, he is still remembered to this very day; his name is still being mentioned and parents still name their children Abel. That is legacy!!! Abel left behind a legacy that still impacts generations and inspires people.

Abel is not alone. Each of the men and women mentioned in Hebrews 11, who are often referred to as the Heroes of Faith, left behind a legacy in his or her own way. In fact, in each generation, people have left behind legacies that live on long after they have passed on to eternity.

When I was a teenager growing up in far-away Africa, I heard about the name John D. Rockefeller and about his generosity that fascinated me to want to learn more about the man. Later I learnt that he started out in life hoeing potatoes under the hot sun for four cents an hour. When he finished high school, he attended a commercial school for only a few months. He never went to college. Yet, he amassed one of the greatest fortunes in history, estimated at up to two billion dollars in the 1930s. What he did with so much wealth was even more remarkable – he gave a lot of it away to charity! He gave away more than 750 million dollars!!! He gave away millions of dollars for medical research and at a point in his life, the foundation he set up, the Rockefeller Foundation, was spending almost one million dollars each month to promote health all over the world. Even though he died more than 80 years ago, John D. Rockefeller is still remembered not only in far-away China because he built a medical facility there that helped save thousands, if not millions, of lives; but he is also remembered in Africa and many other parts of the world because he left behind legacies in these places. Though dead, he still speaks.

Abel left behind a legacy of faith that was different from the legacy Rockefeller left behind but both of them left behind legacies in their time. Now, we live in a different generation but we can still leave behind legacies that will continue to be blessings to generations long after we are gone. What legacies will you leave? [👉](#)



**At the Church of Christ School in Nkwatia-Kwahu, this classroom block has served as a teaching and learning space for many children. It is a gift from Douglas and Margaret Boateng. The Boateng family name will continue to be on the lips of many for many years to come.**



**The Linary church of Christ in Tennessee made it possible for this children's home to be built to provide shelter to orphaned, abandoned and needy children. Each child who has lived or will ever live in this home will always remember and speak of the Linary church of Christ.**



**The Andrea Browning building belonging to Hope Christian Hospital still stands today, serving all the children of the Village of Hope, and many others who live in the rural communities near the Village of Hope. Even though Andrea Browning is dead, she still speaks.**



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**#BrightFuture**

**Portia: Future Clothier**

